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Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations assistance to the African Union Mission in the Sudan

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1590 (2005) of 24 March 2005, in which the Council requested me to report to it within 30 days on options for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS) to reinforce the effort to foster peace in Darfur through appropriate assistance to the African Union Mission in the Sudan (AMIS), including logistical support and technical assistance, and to identify ways in liaison with the African Union (AU) to utilize UNMIS resources, particularly logistical and operations support elements, as well as reserve capacity towards that end.

2. Given the close cooperation with the African Union and with Council members, the request contained in resolution 1590 (2005) was anticipated, and the Secretariat had already begun to develop options to reinforce the efforts of AMIS. I therefore invited the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Alpha Oumar Konaré, for a meeting in New York, which was held on 28 February 2005. During the meeting, it was decided to dispatch a mission to Darfur to assess the security situation and the current deployment of AMIS and to consider requirements for enhancing peace support efforts in Darfur. The African Union led that mission, which also included the United Nations, the European Union and the United States of America. In addition to addressing the issues just mentioned, the assessment mission provided many of the answers to the matters raised in paragraph 5 of resolution 1590 (2005).

II. African Union-led assessment mission

3. I would like to commend the African Union for its leadership of the assessment mission and its insistence on making forthright recommendations on how the work of AMIS could be enhanced. Such candid self-assessments, by the African Union and its partners, of how we can better discharge our collective responsibilities for the success of AMIS are essential.

4. The security situation in Darfur is misleading at the moment, because attacks on civilians are not occurring on the massive scale encountered in 2004. But the violence continues, including a brutal attack on the village of Khor Abeche, in Southern Darfur, on 7 April. Moreover, if those already displaced were to return

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home, it is widely assumed that they would suffer renewed attacks. There is continuing insecurity around many of the existing camps for internally displaced persons; those who are obliged to venture outside the camps risk murder, rape, theft and other crimes. Further, as those camps grow in size and frustrations rise in the absence of any prospect of early returns, there is concern that recruitment and insecurity inside many of the camps may increase. The prevailing insecurity continues to prevent civilian and commercial activities and to impede the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Compliance with the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement is insufficient and the general level of insecurity in Darfur remains unacceptable.

5. At the same time, the mission assessed that, in the areas where AMIS had deployed, it was doing an outstanding job under very difficult circumstances, greatly contributing to an improved security situation. It was therefore concluded that AMIS should be strengthened, initially in two phases, with a possible follow-on operation that should be decided upon in September 2005. This constitutes an ambitious build-up of operational capability in Darfur, which can be accomplished only with strong political and material support from AU member States and external partners.

6. The aim of the first phase, which should be substantially concluded by the end of May 2005, is for AMIS to reach full operational effectiveness within its existing authorized strength of 3,320. Achieving this aim requires full deployment of military, police and other civilian personnel; putting in place the remaining logistics and administrative support, enhancing structures for organization, management, command and control and streamlining some operational procedures. Benchmarks for success in this phase would include full deployment of the authorized Mission and implementation of the recommendations of the AU-led assessment mission for achieving maximum operational capability.

7. The second phase, which would entail deployments from June to August 2005, would expand AMIS to 5,887 military personnel and 1,560 police (totalling 7,447) plus appropriate civilian staff. There would not be any increase in the number of observers as any additional requirement would be met through rationalizing the deployment of the existing 450 personnel. Success for phase II would entail improved compliance with the N'djamena humanitarian ceasefire agreement and the Abuja humanitarian and security protocols; a secure environment for internally displaced persons in and around the camps; and a secure environment and access to humanitarian relief and services for civilians who are not yet displaced (or who are returning) but are deemed vulnerable. Large-scale returns are not anticipated during this phase, and this is only partially due to continuing threats of violence. Even if a secure environment were established throughout Darfur, the lack of food security, the devastation of the economy, and the almost total disruption of normal patterns of life would limit the number of returns in the near future.

8. The aim of the third phase is to contribute to a secure environment throughout Darfur which would permit full returns of displaced persons in time for the planting season of 2006. This must be carried out in close coordination among the military, police, humanitarian and development organizations, civil authorities, and the affected population. To meet this timetable, a decision to initiate the third phase would have to be taken by September 2005.

9. Phase III entails a complex, multidimensional operation of more than 12,000 military and police personnel. While it would be up to the States members of the

African Union to decide on how to proceed, they may conclude that the completion of phase II provides an opportune moment for the wider international community to assume its responsibilities by fielding this larger operation, which would also require a substantial increase in resources.

10. On 28 April, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union met to discuss the situation in Darfur, and adopted a communiqué on the enhancement of AMIS. The Peace and Security Council endorsed the recommendations contained in the report of the Chairperson on the situation in Darfur, including the steps to be taken for AMIS to promote a more secure environment and confidence-building measures, as well as protect civilians and humanitarian operations. The Council further decided to increase the strength of AMIS to a total of 6,171 military personnel, with an appropriate civilian component, including up to 1,560 civilian police. It also appealed to all the partners of the African Union to continue providing support to meet the requirements for the strengthening and sustainment of AMIS.

III. United Nations assistance to AMIS

11. The AU-led assessment mission to Darfur provided an opportunity to explore the options for UNMIS to reinforce the efforts of AMIS, in particular in the areas of logistical support and technical assistance.

12. It was determined that logistical support for the first two phases, as described above, is best accomplished by building on the existing system, in which individual donors provide support to AMIS. Under this arrangement, for example, the United States contracts meals and accommodation through one company, the United Kingdom provides vehicles through another, and Canada and the Netherlands contract helicopter support. Additional contracts are entered into directly by the African Union, with financial contributions from the European Union. After a slow start, this system is working well; to change it at this stage would disrupt operations rather than enhancing them or speeding them up. Material and other support identified by AMIS as required for its expansion would best be provided through existing force generation and logistical support arrangements. AMIS has already identified and informally made available to donors a number of specific items in this regard, including operations support (attack helicopters and armoured personnel carriers), communications capability (repeater stations, real-time information dissemination capability, information technology expertise), intelligence and security capabilities (training of AMIS intelligence operators in modern intelligence gathering, processing and dissemination techniques; provision of maps, satellite photographs and other information), air support (strategic airlift capability, fixed-wing capability for medical evacuations and VIP movements, utility helicopters), general logistical support (troop-carrying vehicles, generators, tents, uniforms, beds, boots, fuel, storage facilities and engineer support).

13. While the current logistical support system should be maintained, the assessment mission recommended a number of measures that could be taken to strengthen logistical operations in the near term. These include the establishment of a small team of experienced contract management staff at El Fasher, who would ensure delivery of service to the correct quantity and quality; appropriate delegation of authority to senior administrative staff of AMIS in Khartoum, especially in the

areas of procurement and financial management; and enhancement of mission support capacity at AU headquarters, to make it possible to undertake support planning, procurement, budgeting, civilian personnel recruitment, police selection and recruitment, and force generation and deployment.

14. The fact that direct logistical support from UNMIS would not be required at this time is welcome, given that, in the months ahead, UNMIS will have to focus all of its resources and attention on deploying in support of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government and SPLM/A. As regards the UNMIS "force reserve" it is required to ensure the safety and security of UNMIS personnel and cannot be diverted to Darfur. As I have stated on previous occasions, the operation in the southern Sudan, which is the result of months of careful planning, should not be compromised or unduly strained, especially not during the start-up phase, by a requirement to mount a parallel operation of similar scope and complexity on short notice. The early deployment and effectiveness of UNMIS is crucial to help the parties keep the peace process on track, a process which has wide implications for peace throughout the country.

15. The above notwithstanding, the United Nations is in a position to provide needed technical assistance and training support in several areas:

- Identification of police candidates from AU countries to be deployed to AMIS in support of the conclusion of phase I.
- The United Nations could send a small team of planners to work with the African Union in Addis Ababa and El Fasher to develop a detailed operational plan for the second phase of AMIS expansion, building on the basic concept of operations developed during the AU-led assessment.
- The United Nations Assistance Cell, which was established in Addis Ababa to support the Darfur Integrated Task Force of the AU Commission, is now fully operational, and can provide technical advice to the African Union in the areas of logistics, planning and management. The expertise of the Cell can also be augmented or modified following requests for specific types of assistance from the African Union.
- The Department of Peacekeeping Operations, through its military, police and civilian training establishments and in cooperation with UNMIS, may also support predeployment training for AU personnel. This may be implemented through the design and planning of training curricula and direct delivery of training to identified target groups at various suitable locations in AU member States. Six AU military officers are already scheduled to join the UNMIS predeployment training to be held in Nairobi from 26 April to 8 May 2005. The Department could also invite military and police personnel from AU member States to participate in its regular schedule of peacekeeping courses.
- The Department of Peacekeeping Operations could also support African Union efforts regarding police in a number of areas, including the development of job descriptions and profiles that would clearly articulate to police contributors what is required; development of criteria for the selection and recruitment of individual police officers and formed police units; assistance in the establishment of a selection assistance team arrangement; design and development of predeployment and induction police training packages; and

assistance in reviewing the AMIS police concept of operations, standing operating procedures and guidelines for police-contributing countries.

- The United Nations could also provide support to the African Union in convening troop contributor and pledging conferences for AMIS.

16. In order to closely consult with the African Union on the scope and nature of possible United Nations support to AMIS, I requested my Special Adviser, Lakhdar Brahimi, to meet with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission immediately after the meeting of the Peace and Security Council. At their meeting, it was agreed that the two organizations should discuss in detail ways in which the United Nations could assist with military and logistics planning, as well as appealing for funding for the expansion of AMIS as decided by the Peace and Security Council. It was further agreed that the United Nations could assist in organizing and co-host a pledging conference to mobilize resources for the expanded AU Mission.

IV. Observations

17. AMIS is effective in the areas where it is deployed, and therefore needs strengthening to enable it to expand its presence to cover more of the vast and difficult terrain of Darfur. While AMIS will continue to rely on external support to implement phases I and II described by the AU-led assessment mission, the assistance UNMIS can provide is limited, because the United Nations Mission will have to focus all of its resources and attention on deploying in support of the implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Government and SPLM/A. In addition, the operation in the southern Sudan, which is the result of months of careful planning, should not be compromised or unduly strained, especially not during the delicate start-up phase.

18. The United Nations and the Mission in the Sudan can assist in the following areas where required and appropriate:

- Identify qualified police personnel in support of completing phase I.
- Assisting the African Union to develop a detailed operational plan for the expansion of AMIS.
- Technical advice in the areas of logistics, planning and management.
- Support to training for AU personnel.
- Support in selecting police personnel for phase II.
- Support in convening troop contributor and pledging conferences.

19. AMIS has been a groundbreaking initiative for the African Union and its supporters within the international community. The Mission has accomplished a remarkable amount in a very short time and despite significant constraints. Those constraints have been identified in the report of the AU-led assessment mission. It is now critical for all concerned to do their part. States members of the African Union must now identify personnel to join AMIS; the AU Commission must strengthen planning and management capacity in order to support an expanded mission; and partners must provide the African Union with the means required to carry out a costly and challenging task.